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ABSTRACT

This paper describes how one New York City school district uses staff development to change instruction system-wide, discussing the role local school districts play in systemic school improvement and the role of professional development in connecting reform policy to classroom practice. The paper emphasizes the district's sustained attention to school improvement through professional development. The district's improvement strategy includes: (1) a set of organizing principles about the process of systemic change and the role of professional development in that process and (2) a set of specific activities that emphasize system-wide improvement of instruction. Its staff development has distinctively organized professional development models. Organizing principles include: focusing only on instruction; viewing instructional change as a long, multi-stage process; sharing expertise to drive instructional change; emphasizing system-wide improvement; working together to generate good ideas; setting clear expectations, then decentralizing; and promoting collegiality, caring, and respect. Specific professional development models include the professional development laboratory; instructional consulting services; inter-visitation and peer networks; off-site training; and oversight and principal site visits. This project's professional development is kept visible in the district budget, with the district committed to spending a specific proportion of the budget as an expression of the priority it places on professional development. The district uses multi-pocket budgeting to support this effort (orchestrating multiple sources of revenue around one priority to produce maximum revenue

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for that purpose). Four appendixes present sample agendas, schedules, and forms and a description of one program. (SM)

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INVESTING IN TEACHER LEARNING:

Staff Development and Instructional Improvement in Community School District #2, New York City

Richard F. Elmore

with the assistance of
Deanna Burney

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August 1997

Preface

This paper was prepared for the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future. Earlier parts of the research were supported by the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE) and by the Center on Restructuring Schools, under grants from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education (CPRE Grant # RIIG10007).

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Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Professional Development and Instructional Improvement 2

Organizing Principles: Mobilizing People in the Service of Instructional Improvement 8

Specific Professional Development Models 14

References 39

Appendices 40

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Introduction

The District Role in School Improvement

The context for this paper is a general concern among educational reformers and students of educational reform about the role of local school districts in the improvement of teaching and learning in schools. This concern takes a number of forms:

- Little evidence that districts have played a constructive role in instructional improvement in the past (Elmore 1993);

- Increasing criticism of local boards and administrators as politically and bureaucratically self-interested actors who often stand in the way of real improvement in teaching and learning (Doyle and Finn 1984, Chubb and Moe 1990);

- Increasing emphasis in reforms on bypassing local districts and constructing direct relationships between states and schools — e.g., charter schools, interdistrict and public/private choice programs, school-based state accountability systems, school takeover programs (Elmore, Abelmann, Fuhrman 1996);

- A movement on the part of school reformers to invent new forms of local organization that bypass or cut across traditional district jurisdictions — e.g., Annenberg, the New American Schools Development Corporation proposal to create networks of schools with a common reform interest across districts within a given geographical area.

These developments suggest a willingness on the part of policy makers and reformers to challenge the traditional role of the local school district as the primary administrative unit of American education. The challenge grows out of a deepening skepticism about the capacity of local districts to produce and sustain improvement by changing the quality of instruction for students in American schools.

Professional Development and Instructional Improvement

There is growing consensus among educational reformers that professional development for teachers and administrators lies at the center of educational reform and instructional improvement. The logic of the argument goes like this: Students' academic performance, by any number of measures, has proven to be relatively static in the face of more than a decade of educational reform. In most of the reforms, states and localities have focused on changing the guidance schools receive on what students should be taught (content standards); changing the structures and processes by which schools are held accountable (student performance standards, assessments, rewards, and penalties); and changing the governance structures by which accountability is defined (site-based management). In order to progress from reforms of this sort to changes in student performance, one has to assume that changes in policy and organization will result in a different kind of teaching, which will in turn result in a different kind of learning for students, who will in turn demonstrate this learning by doing better on measures of performance. One key element missing in this formulation, however, is the *knowledge* required for teachers and administrators to engage in a different kind of teaching and learning. Policies, by themselves, don't impart new knowledge; they create the occasion for educators to seek new knowledge and turn that knowledge into new practice. Hence, professional development is the main link connecting policy to practice.

We know a good deal about the characteristics of successful professional development: It focuses on concrete classroom applications of general ideas; it exposes teachers to actual practice rather than to descriptions of practice; it involves opportunities for observation, critique, and reflection; it involves opportunities for group support and collaboration; and it involves deliberate evaluation and feedback by skilled practitioners with expertise about good teaching. But while we know a good deal about the characteristics of good professional development, we know a good deal less about how to organize successful professional development so as to influence practice in large numbers of schools and classrooms.

The Purpose of this Paper

This paper describes and analyzes one school district's use of staff development to change instruction systemwide. The paper is designed to provide guidance to educators who are interested in the role local school districts might play in systemic school improvement and in the role of professional development in connecting reform policy to classroom practice.

The subject of the paper is Community School District 2 in New York City. Its superintendent, district staff, principals, and teachers have a growing reputation for sustained attention to school improvement through professional development. I focus on a single school district, rather than a number of districts, for several reasons: First, while virtually every school district in the country engages in some kind of professional development, only a very few districts have a serious strategy for using professional development to bring about system-wide changes in instruction. The study of systemic uses of professional development involves a handful of specific cases.

Second, my aims are primarily practical. I would like to describe concrete strategies that districts can use to mobilize knowledge in the service of instructional improvement. This kind of practical work is best done at the level of specific cases.

Third, among the school districts I have visited in my research during the past 10 years, I have found none with a strategy that is as focused and well developed as District 2's, although, as we shall see, this strategy is far from a complete solution to the problem of how to mobilize knowledge to change practice. Many districts are doing some version of some of the activities I will describe in District 2. No other district I have observed is doing all of the activities in the comprehensive and strategic fashion I have observed in District 2. So District 2 is an exemplar, not so much because it engages in specific professional development activities that other districts do not, but because it does a variety of things in a uniquely systematic way. The lessons from District 2 are as much lessons about how to organize and manage professional development around the objective of instructional change as they are about specific professional development activities.

This paper is not an evaluation of District 2's professional development efforts. That would require a more systematic study of the effects of professional development on teachers and students than I have been able to do. Nor is this paper an attempt at a definitive account of what works in the use of professional development for instructional change. That project would require a detailed look at a number of activities across a number of sites. This paper has a much simpler purpose — to document, describe, and analyze a single attempt to use professional development to mobilize knowledge in the service of system-wide instructional improvement. In this sense, this case can be seen as an "existence proof" that it is possible for local districts to be agents of serious instructional improvement. It can also be seen as a source of ideas for practitioners in other settings to use in thinking about their own school improvement efforts.

At the end of this paper, I attempt to address the question of what lessons and practices I have observed in District 2 that might generalize to other local school districts. I should say at the outset, though, that I make no broad claim for the generalizability of

lessons from District 2. My experience is that educators like to think that their schools, districts, and communities are unique, and that things that work somewhere else couldn't possibly work in their backyard. While the features of District 2's strategy may be tailored closely to its specific context, its general approach to viewing professional development as an instrument of system-wide instructional improvement is one that should be useful across many contexts.

The District Context

District 2 is one of 32 community school districts in New York City. The community districts were formed in the late 1960s as part of a system-wide decentralization plan, stemming from political turmoil in the city around the issue of community control of schools (Elmore 1993). The community districts have responsibility for elementary through junior high schools, roughly from kindergarten through grade nine. High schools are a city-wide responsibility lodged with the central board of education, although, as we shall see, these boundaries are often blurred. District 2 has 24 elementary schools, 7 junior high or intermediate schools, and 17 so-called Option Schools, which are alternative schools organized around themes with a variety of different grade configurations.

District 2 has one of the most diverse student populations of any community district in the city. The geographic boundaries of the district extend from 96th Street in the north down the east side of Central Park, crossing to include the west side of Manhattan at 59th Street, and including all of lower Manhattan except a small area on the Lower East Side that is Community District 3. District 2's area includes some of the highest priced residential and commercial real estate in the world, on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, and some of the most densely populated poorer communities in the city, in Chinatown in Lower Manhattan and in Hell's Kitchen on the West Side.

The student population of the district is 22,000, of which about 29 percent are white, 14 percent black, about 22 percent Hispanic, about 34 percent Asian, and less than one percent Native American. About 20 percent of students use English as a second language, and recent immigrants have come from about 100 different countries. About 50 percent of students come from families whose incomes are officially classified as below the poverty level — a slightly higher proportion of students in elementary schools are classified as poor than in junior high schools. About 200 students reside in temporary shelters, and about 2,000 students receive special education services. The proportion of students living in poverty is between 70 percent and 100 percent in 14 of the district's schools, with five of those schools having proportions of poor children between 95 percent and 100 percent. At the other extreme, nine schools have proportions of poverty at 25 percent or below.[1]

[1] This account is drawn from district records.

District 2 has a thriving, diverse, middle-class population of families who take public education seriously, but who are also willing to make financial sacrifices to send their children to readily available private schools if they find the quality of public schools lacking. Principals speak consistently of having to win the loyalty and allegiance of middle-class parents through providing high-quality education. The schools and classrooms of District 2 are a virtual United Nations of diversity (the UN is actually in the district) — every school has substantial racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity, even when the student population is predominantly of one race or ethnicity. Most schools have substantial diversity of social class.

District 2 includes some the nation's most prominent cultural institutions — the Metropolitan Museum, the Guggenheim Museum, the Whitney Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Museum of African American History and Arts, to name a few. It also includes neighborhoods that have played a major role in the social and cultural history of the country — Greenwich Village and SoHo, which are centers for contemporary art and culture, and Hell's Kitchen, Little Italy, and the Lower East Side, which have been the point of entry for virtually every wave of American immigration since the middle of the 19th century.

The district's enrollment has grown slowly but steadily in recent years, partly as a result of in-migration of students to the district and partly as a result of middle-class parents again choosing to send their children to public schools. Because of this modest growth in enrollment and also because of the district's active pursuit of outside funding, the district's total budget has increased slightly every year during a time when the citywide education budget has been cut dramatically. While total revenue has grown slightly in the district in recent years, it has had to work harder and harder to fund the district's professional development activities, since increasing enrollments have steadily eroded its discretionary funds.

Anthony Alvarado became superintendent of District 2 in 1987, after spending 10 years as community superintendent in District 4, in Spanish Harlem, immediately adjacent to District 2 above 96th Street on the north, and after an 18-month stint as chancellor of the New York City public school system. Among Alvarado's earliest initiatives in District 2 was to exercise a strong hand in personnel decisions. In his first year, he recruited and hired a deputy superintendent, Elaine Fink, whose experience and job description emphasized direct work with schools, rather than central office administration. Later, he hired Bea Johnstone, whose credentials were also primarily in work with schools, to oversee staff development. Alvarado communicated to principals early in his tenure that he expected them to play a strong role in instructional

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improvement in their schools. "We expected principals to have a clear vision of what they wanted to have happen in teaching and learning in their schools and to be willing to question themselves and their capacity to deliver," Alvarado said. Some principals found Alvarado's expectations congenial, others did not. Over the first four years of Alvarado's tenure, he replaced 20 of the district's 30 or so principals; most were "counseled out" and found jobs in other districts, three retired. At the same time he was exercising influence over the appointment of principals, Alvarado created 17 so-called Option Schools, small alternative programs with distinctive themes, and staffed them with "directors," a title he had invented earlier in District 4. The role is a hybrid of senior teacher and principal.

While he was changing the leadership of District 2 schools, Alvarado was also working on the transformation of the teaching force. District staff estimate that they have replaced about 50 percent of the district's teachers in the eight years of Alvarado's tenure. He communicated the expectation that principals and school directors were to take an active role evaluating teachers in their buildings, establishing networks with other principals and with higher education institutions to recruit student teachers and new teachers, and working with district personnel to ease the transition of ineffective teachers out of the district and prevent the transfer of ineffective teachers into the district. As we shall see, the hiring and evaluation of teachers in District 2 depend heavily on the creation of a strong sense of collegiality among teachers within schools and strong working relationships between principals and district office personnel.

Alvarado's early personnel decisions at the level of the central office, school leadership, and the teaching force sent a strong signal that his priorities were focused on instructional improvement. These decisions also communicated that instructional improvement depends heavily on people's talents and motivations. These combined efforts seem to have worked.

In 1987 Community School District 2 ranked 10th in the city in reading and fourth in mathematics out of 32 districts. In 1996, it ranked second in reading and second in mathematics. These gains occurred during a time in which the number of immigrant students in the district increased and the student population grew more linguistically diverse and economically poor. Many of the immigrants entering school came with less education and linguistic development than had previously been the case. Yet improvements in the quality of teaching have proved more powerful than these challenges to the achievement of students.

Elements of the Strategy

During the eight years of Alvarado's tenure in District 2, the district has evolved a strategy for the use of professional development to improve teaching and learning in schools.

This strategy consists of two large pieces: (1) a set of organizing principles about the process of systemic change and the role of professional development in that process; and (2) a set of specific activities, or models of staff development, that focus on system-wide improvement of instruction. While the specific activities or models are important, it is the organizing principles that give the overall strategy its meaning. While District 2 does many interesting things with staff development — some of which look very much like what other districts do and some of which are less conventional — what is distinctive is the way these professional development models are organized, conceptually and managerially. So we will focus first on the organizing principles that shape District 2's strategy and then on the range of models the district uses to implement these principles.

Organizing Principles: Mobilizing People in the Service of Instructional Improvement

Central to Alvarado's strategy in District 2 is the creation of a strong belief system — or a culture of shared values — in the system around instructional improvement that binds the work of teachers and administrators into a coherent set of actions and programs. Like most belief systems, this one is not written down, but it is expressed in the words and actions of people in the system. I have reduced this complex set of ideas to seven organizing principles that emerge from the ideas and actions of people in the district.

It's about Instruction . . . and Only about Instruction

The central idea in District 2's strategy is that the work of everyone in the system, from central office administrators to building principals, to teachers and support staff in schools, is about providing high-quality instruction to children. This principle permeates the language that the district leaders use to describe the purposes of their work, the way district staff manage their relationships with school staff, the way principals and school directors plan their own work, the way they interact with district staff, and the way professional development is organized and delivered. Most school systems purport to organize themselves to support good instruction; few that I have seen carry this principle as far as does District 2.

Alvarado describes the district's commitment to instruction this way: "Our time is precious when we visit schools and when we work with people in schools. We try to communicate clearly to them [principals and school directors] that we're not interested in talking to them about getting their broken windows fixed or getting the custodians to clean the bathrooms more often. Not that those things aren't important, but there are ways of dealing with them that don't involve us spending precious time that could be focused more productively on instruction. So when they [principals and school directors] raise those issues with us, we say quite firmly that we're there to talk about what they are doing specifically to help a given teacher do a better job of teaching reading. We try to model with our words and behavior a consuming interest in teaching and learning, almost to the exclusion of everything else. And we expect principals to model the same behavior with the teachers in their schools" (Interview, 9/23/92).

Alvarado describes the genesis of this idea from his previous experience as community superintendent in District 4: "My strategy there was to make it possible for gifted and energetic people to create schools that represented their best ideas about teaching and learning and to let parents choose the schools that best matched their children's interest. We generated a lot of interest and a lot of good programs. But the main flaw with that

strategy was that it never reached every teacher in every classroom; it focused on those who showed energy and commitment to change. So, after a while, improvement slowed down as we ran out of energetic and committed people. Many of the programs became inward-looking instead of trying to find new ways to do things. And it focused people's attention on this or that 'program,' rather than on the broader problem of how to improve teaching and learning across the board. So when I moved to District 2, I was determined to push beyond the District 4 strategy and to focus more broadly on instructional improvement across the board, not just on the creation of alternative programs" (Interview, 9/23/92).

Instructional Change is a Long, Multi-stage Process

Teachers do not respond to simple exhortations to change their teaching, according to District 2 staff. Bea Johnstone, director of educational initiatives and coordinator of the district's professional development activities, describes the process of instructional change as involving at least four distinct stages — awareness, planning, implementation, and reflection. Awareness consists of providing teachers with access to books, outside experts, or examples of practice in other settings as a way of demonstrating that it is possible to do things differently. Planning consists of working with teachers to design curriculum and create a classroom environment that supports that curriculum. Implementation consists of trying out new approaches to teaching in a setting where teachers can be observed and can receive feedback. Reflection consists of opportunities for teachers to reflect with other teachers and with outside experts on what worked and what didn't when they tried new practices, and to use that reflection to influence their practice.

At any given time, Johnstone says, groups of teachers are involved in different activities at different stages of development. They may be involved in implementation and reflection in reading and literacy while they are in the early stages of awareness in math. Johnstone describes the process as a gradual softening up of teachers' preconceptions about what is possible, an introduction to new ideas in settings and from people who have credibility as practitioners, a chance to adapt new ideas to teachers' existing practice under the watchful eye of someone who is a more accomplished practitioner, and reflection on the problems posed by new practices with peers and experts. Hence, the district's strategy is to engage teachers and principals in a variety of instructional practices that move them through various stages of the process in different domains of practice.

Shared Expertise is the Driver of Instructional Change

The enemy of instructional change, according to District 2 staff, is isolation. Alvarado describes the problem this way: "There is a tendency for teachers and principals to get pulled down into all the reasons why it is impossible to do things differ-

ently in their particular setting — and there are lots of reasons why it is difficult. What we try to do is to get a pair of outside eyes, not involved in the maelstrom, to bring a fresh perspective to what's going on in a given setting" (Interview, 10/25/95).

Shared expertise takes a number of forms in District 2. District staff regularly visit principals and teachers in schools and classrooms, both as part of a formal evaluation process and as part of an informal process of observation and advice. Within schools, principals and teachers routinely engage in grade-level and cross-grade conferences on curriculum and teaching. Across schools, principals and teachers regularly visit other schools and classrooms. At the district level, staff development consultants regularly work with teachers in their classrooms. Teachers regularly work with teachers in other schools for extended periods of supervised practice. Teams of principals and teachers regularly work on districtwide curriculum and staff development issues. Principals regularly meet in each others' schools and observe practice in those schools. Principals and teachers regularly visit schools and classrooms within and outside the district. And principals regularly work in pairs on common issues of instructional improvement in their schools. The underlying idea behind all these forms of interaction is that shared expertise is more likely to produce change than individuals working in isolation.

Focus on System-wide Improvement

The enemy of systemic change, according to District 2 staff, is the "project." Whether projects take the form of special programs for selected teachers and students or categorical activities focused on students with specific needs, they tend to isolate and balkanize new ideas. Operationally, systemic change in District 2 means that every principal and every teacher is responsible for instructional improvement continuously in some key element of their work. Instructional improvement is not the responsibility of a select few who operate in isolation from others, but rather a joint, collegial responsibility of everyone in the system, working together in a variety of ways across all schools.

At the same time, District 2 staff recognize that change can't occur in all dimensions of a person's work simultaneously. So while they create the expectation that instructional improvement is everyone's responsibility, they also focus improvement efforts on specific parts of the curriculum and on specific dimensions of teaching practice. As we shall see later, initial improvement efforts focused on literacy, reading, and writing and have gradually branched out into other areas, including math. The underlying principle in these actions is that, even though instructional change efforts need to be focused and gradual, they should be universal. Everyone in the system should be engaged in instructional improvement as part of the routine work.

District 2 staff don't say exactly what they regard as the ideal end state of systemic instructional improvement, but presumably it is not a stable condition in which everyone is doing some version of "best practice" in every content area in every classroom. Rather, the goal is probably something like a process of continuous improvement in every school, eventually reaching every classroom, in which principals and teachers routinely open up parts of their practice to observation by experts and colleagues, in which they see change in practice as a routine event, and where colleagues participate routinely in various forms of collaboration with other practitioners to examine and develop their practice. This is clearly not an end state in any static sense, but rather a process of continuous instructional improvement unfolding indefinitely over time.

Good Ideas Come from Talented People Working Together

Alvarado says, "Eighty percent of what is going on now in the district I could never have conceived of when we started this effort. Our initial idea was to focus on getting good leadership into schools, so we recruited people as principals who we knew had a strong record of involvement in instruction, and we tried to create a lot of reinforcement for that by the way we organized around their work. Then we wanted to get an instructional sense to permeate the whole organization, so we said, 'Let's pick something we can all work on that has obvious relevance to our community and our kids. So we settled on literacy. Since then, we've built out from that model largely by capitalizing on the initiative and energy of the people we've brought in. They produce a constant supply of new ideas that we try to support" (Interview, 10/25/95).

A focus on people working together to generate new ideas permeates the managerial language of District 2 staff. Alvarado's descriptions of his and his staff's work are peppered with examples of specific principals or schools that are either exceptional or in need of improvement in some respect, and the efforts district staff make to put the former together with the latter. He speaks with pride about gradually increasing control at the district and school levels over recruitment and assignment of teachers, and deflecting the reassignment of teachers to District 2 who have been released from other districts. The district staff organizes its time around work with specific schools, based on its assessment of their unique problems, and often asks principals pointed questions about the progress of specific teachers within their schools. This emphasis on attracting, selecting, and managing talented people in relation to one another is a central tenet of District 2's view of how improvement occurs.

Set Clear Expectations, Then Decentralize

As noted above, District 2's strategy emphasizes the creation of lateral networks among teachers and principals and the selection of people with a strong interest in

instructional improvement. A corollary of these principles is the idea of setting clear expectations and then decentralizing responsibility. Each principal or school director prepares an annual statement of supervisory goals and objectives according to a plan set out by the district, and in the ensuing year each principal is usually visited formally twice by the deputy superintendent, Elaine Fink, and often by Alvarado himself. The conversation in these reviews turns on the school's progress toward the objectives outlined in the principal's or director's plan. Over time, schools have gained increasing authority over the district's professional development budget, to the point where most of the funds now reside in the budgets of the schools.

While Alvarado and the district staff generally favor decentralization, they are pragmatists. "If the teachers really own teaching and learning," Alvarado says, "how will they really need or want to be involved in governance decisions? Our instincts are to push responsibility all the way down, but they may not want it, and it may get in the way of our broader goals of instructional improvement."

Collegiality, Caring, and Respect

"Our vision of instructional improvement," Alvarado says, "depends heavily on people being willing to take the initiative, to take risks, and to take responsibility for themselves, for students, and for each other. You only get this kind of result when people cultivate a deep personal and professional respect and caring for each other. We have set about finding and hiring like-minded people who are interested in making education work for kids. We care about and value each other, even when we disagree. Without collegiality on this level you can't generate the level of enthusiasm, energy, and commitment we have." According to Alvarado, "The worst part of bureaucracy is the dehumanization it brings. We try to communicate that professionalism, and working in a school system, is not a narrowed version of life; it is life itself, and it should take into account the full range of personal values and feelings that people have."

Alvarado, Fink, and Johnstone articulate this broad conception of collegiality with extraordinary fervor. In their view, improvements in practice require exceptional personal commitment on the part of every person in the organization, not just to good instruction, but also to meeting the basic needs of the human beings involved in creating good instruction — their need for personal identification with a common enterprise, their need for help and support in meshing their personal lives with the life of the organization in which they work, and their need to feel that they play a part in shaping the common purposes of the organization. They speak of a blurring of the boundaries between the deeply personal and the culture of the organization, of offering mutual support and acknowledgment for people who are undergoing trauma in their personal lives, of nurturing the self-respect of people who are willing to take personal risks by

trying out new ideas, and of creating a culture of mutual respect among administrators, teachers, students, and parents. Deep and sustained change in teaching and learning, they argue, cannot be sustained simply by managing people effectively around common purposes, or by creating norms and structures that reinforce accountability. Deep and sustained change requires that people feel a personal commitment to each other and a willingness to manifest that commitment by demonstrating mutual care and concern.

Alvarado worries that District 2's approach to instructional improvement will be seen by outsiders as a collection of management principles, rather than as a culture based on norms of commitment, mutual care, and concern. Implementing the principles without the culture, he argues, will not work because management alone cannot affect peoples' deeply held values. He also worries that emphasizing managerial principles at the expense of organizational culture makes it appear that district administrators can change practice, when, in fact, the process of changing practice has to originate with teachers, students, administrators, and parents working out difficult problems together in a web of shared expectations. The effectiveness of district-level management, he argues, is determined by the level of commitment and mutual support among those responsible for instruction.

Specific Professional Development Models

Most school systems see professional development as a discrete activity, organized and managed as one specialized function among many, usually from the central office. In this view, professional development is an activity or service that is provided to schools as one of a number of centrally organized administrative functions. The priorities that drive the content and delivery of professional development are a combination of district- and school-level goals for improvement of curriculum, teaching, and school organization. Typically what emerges is a menu of discrete professional development activities, usually focused on specific content issues (a new way to teach math, for example) or on pressing issues in the daily conduct of schooling (discipline policy, for example). These activities are often organized and delivered centrally, so that school personnel participate in training that is designed and conducted in isolation from their work setting. The theory behind this way of organizing staff development, if there is one, stresses the economies of scale that are achieved by organizing and delivering staff development at the district level and the importance of exposing teachers and principals to new ideas in their field, so that they can take these ideas back to their schools and classrooms and apply them.

In District 2, professional development has a very different meaning from this conventional model. Professional development is a management strategy rather than a specialized administrative function. Professional development is what administrative leaders do when they are doing their jobs, not a specialized function that some people in the organization do and others don't. Instructional improvement is the main purpose of district administration, and professional development is the chief means of achieving that purpose. Anyone with line administrative responsibility in the organization has responsibility for professional development as a central part of his or her job description. Anyone with staff responsibility has the responsibility to support those who are engaged in staff development.

One consequence of this view is that the lines between traditional management functions (oversight, accountability, resource allocation, for example) and professional development are blurred in District 2. Much of what would be regarded in many systems as routine management has been folded into District 2's professional development strategy, and much of what would be regarded as professional development in many systems has been folded into management. So it is impossible to disentangle professional development from general management in District 2 because the two are, for all practical purposes, synonymous.

Consequently, District 2 personnel do not see professional development as a discrete set of activities centrally provided in a particular place at a particular time on a particu-

lar subject. Nor do they see the purpose of professional development to be providing useful ideas that can be taken back to the school or classroom. Instead, professional development permeates the work of the organization, and the organization of the work. It pops up in several forms in the course of a day for a given teacher or principal. It insinuates itself into the way teachers do their jobs and the way they relate to each other in the workplace. Professional development sometimes occurs in settings apart from the schools where people work. But most professional development is delivered in the actual settings where it is designed to be used, in schools and classrooms. Staff developers, district administrators, and principals never expect ideas generated in settings outside the classroom to be taken back and applied. Rather, the prevailing theory is that changes in instruction occur only when teachers receive more or less continuous oversight and support focused on the practical details of what it means to teach effectively.

I have grouped District 2's professional development models into five major categories. These categories include most, but by no means all, of what District 2 regards as professional development. They represent the implementation of the organizing principles outlined in the previous section. In addition, the models constitute a broad agenda of professional development that is constantly shifting in response to learning in the system and initiatives from teachers and principals, rather than a fixed menu.

The Professional Development Laboratory

One example of how professional development permeates the organization of District 2 is the Professional Development Laboratory (PDL). The design of the PDL is relatively simple and ingenious. The district staff designate an experienced practitioner as a Resident Teacher, in collaboration with principals, school directors, and the head of the PDL. A Resident Teacher agrees to accept a certain number of teachers as visitors in her classroom. These teachers are called Visiting Teachers; they apply for this designation with the consent of their principals or school directors. Each Visiting Teacher spends three weeks of intensive observation and supervised practice in the Resident Teacher's classroom. While the Visiting Teacher is working with the Resident Teacher, an experienced and highly qualified substitute teacher, called an Adjunct Teacher, takes over the Visiting Teacher's classroom. The Adjunct Teacher spends considerable time observing and practicing in the Resident Teacher's classroom. The Adjunct Teacher then spends one week with the Visiting Teacher before the Visiting Teacher's time with the Resident Teacher in order to acclimate to the Visiting Teacher's classroom. The Adjunct also spends one week with the Visiting Teacher after he or she returns to the classroom to support the development of new practices learned in the Resident's classroom. Resident Teachers follow up with visits to the Visiting Teacher's classroom after the Visitors have finished their three-week rotation to consult on issues of practice.

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There are six possible three- to four-week rotations of Visitors with Residents during the school year. In any given year, 10 to 12 teachers are designated as Residents. If the PDL were running at full capacity, it could handle somewhere in the neighborhood of 70 teachers per year, but Residents typically do not accept Visitors in every cycle, so in a typical year about 16 to 20 Visitors receive PDL training. The main cost of the PDL, after the initial training of Residents, is the substitute teachers' compensation paid to the Adjuncts who cover the Visiting Teachers' classrooms. This cost is budgeted in the individual school's professional development plan and paid out of the school's professional development allocation (see Table 1, p. 30).

The PDL has been in operation for five years and originated from a collaborative proposal between District 2, New York University, and the United Federation of Teachers to the Morgan Foundation. The PDL operates in at least one other New York community district. According to Barbara Schneider, the current coordinator of the PDL, the idea for the lab grew out of a site visit that she and a group of parents and teachers made to the Schenley High School in Pittsburgh, a school specifically designed to be both a working school and a site for staff development. They adapted the model in District 2 by locating professional development activity in several schools under the guidance of Resident Teachers.

According to Bea Johnstone, the PDL is "explicitly not designed on the deficit model"; that is, Visiting Teachers apply to the program and are chosen based on the school's staff development priorities, rather than being judged to be in need of remediation. Barbara Schneider says that she explicitly had to resist the deficit model in the early years of the Lab because principals wanted to use it to deal with their weakest teachers. Although the Lab is not designed for remediation, Schneider says, she and the principals have become increasingly flexible in their decisions about who to accept and are more willing now to accept a few less-experienced and weaker teachers. The focus of the PDL on promoting quality instruction and encouraging good teachers makes it a valued experience that carries status among teachers who participate and creates demand for participation among teachers who have not yet participated.

Instructional Consulting Services

District 2 also invests heavily in professional development consultants who work directly with teachers individually and in groups at the school site. Over time, the district has developed two main types of consulting arrangements. The first type relies on outside consultants, experts in a given instructional area who are employed under contractual arrangements, sometimes with universities, sometimes as independent consultants. The second type relies on district consultants, typically recruited from the

ranks of district personnel, paid directly on the district budget, and given an assignment to work in a given instructional area. Principals and school heads play a key role in assessing the needs of the school and brokering consulting services.

The district's first instructional improvement initiative, which began soon after Alvarado's arrival in the district eight years ago, relied exclusively on outside consultants and was focused on literacy, reading, and writing. Through the district's early involvement with Lucy Calkins and the Writing Project at Teachers College, Columbia University, the staff began to inquire about who had the expertise to work directly with teachers on a broad scale to develop skills focused on the teaching of writing and the use of literature in the development of students' literacy. The district identified Diane Snowball, an Australian educator, and hired her, through a contractual arrangement with Teachers College, for a one-year consulting arrangement. This has subsequently grown into a large-scale, multiyear agreement, involving several Australians, who have taken up residence in New York and provide consulting services to a number of schools in the district and in the city at large.

Snowball's approach to consulting, which has become the norm for external consultants, is to establish close working relationships with small groups of teachers in several schools. School schedules are typically constructed to allow common planning time by grade level, so that all the first-grade teachers, for example, would have a designated common time available to work together on instructional issues. The understanding between principals, teachers, and district personnel is that some amount of this common planning time will be used for teachers to meet with professional development consultants. In addition, Snowball would work with individual teachers in their classrooms, either at the invitation of the teacher or the encouragement of the principal. This classroom-based consultation would involve observation of a teacher working with students, demonstration lessons given by Snowball herself, and debriefings with individual teachers. Finally, Snowball would occasionally work with larger groups of teachers, either from one school or from a number of schools, to introduce them to the ideas of process writing and literature-based reading instruction. These larger professional development sessions were seen as ways of creating demand for consulting services, rather than as sufficient in themselves to change teachers' instructional practice.

Over time, this external consulting practice in District 2 has grown to the point where in the 1995-96 school year it involved 11 contract consultants, working across a number of content areas. Each consultant typically works one-on-one with eight to ten teachers for blocks of three to four months each, and in addition works with grade-level teams and larger groups of teachers during planning time, at the lunch hour and after school. Consultants are also frequently involved in intervisitations (see page 19,

"Intervisition and Peer Networks"). The district negotiates a broad agreement with the consultants for a certain specified amount of services delivered to schools, and principals in schools make specific arrangements for consultants to work with specific teachers according to the goals outlined in their annual professional development plans. Most of the external consulting services are paid for out of schools' professional development budgets.

As this external consulting model has developed, the district has adapted and modified it for use with district staff developers, who provide consulting services but who are employees of the district rather than outside contractors. The emergence of the district staff development model took place around the introduction of instructional improvement in mathematics. When the district decided to expand its improvement efforts from literacy to mathematics, it contracted with Marilyn Burns, a California mathematics professional development consultant, to provide summer workshops. These summer workshops are offered in four levels, so by the fourth year of the mathematics initiative, a cadre of teachers had completed four consecutive summers of mathematics professional development. Last year, the district hired one of Burns's staff development consultants, a senior teacher from California, to provide external consulting services. In the spring of 1995, the district designated a full-time mathematics consultant, Lucy Mahon, an elementary school administrator with extensive training in mathematics professional development, whose first job was to work during the summer and the next school year with the cadre of teachers who had completed all four levels of summer math professional development. Some of these teachers are becoming the district's math consultants, working in conjunction with Mahon to provide consulting services to teachers in math instruction.

In the meantime, Mahon works as a math consultant to teachers in schools. Appendix A shows an example of a series of consulting sessions, delivered by Mahon over a three-day period in a single school. In these sessions, Mahon teaches a series of demonstration lessons (in this case, nine lessons), typically with two or three teachers observing each lesson, Mahon meets with grade-level teams of teachers during their common preparation time (in this case, first- through fifth-grade teams); she consults with individual teachers on specific lessons they are preparing, sometimes observed by other teachers (in this case, by four teachers); and she meets with a school-level math team, which has been designated to act as a conduit to the other teachers in the school for new ideas in math instruction. In this particular school, Mahon now runs these three-day consulting sessions every three weeks through the school year.

District 2 staff see the emergence of this internal consulting model as evidence of how the district has learned to cultivate and acknowledge expertise within its own ranks as a source for instructional improvement.

Overall, the District 2 professional development consulting model stresses direct work by external consultants and district staff developers with individual teachers on concrete problems related to instruction in a given content area; work with grade-level teams of teachers on common problems across their classrooms; consultation with individual teachers who are developing new approaches to teaching in their classrooms that might be used by other teachers; and work with larger groups of teachers to familiarize them with the basic ideas behind instructional improvement in a given content area. This form of delivery for professional development sends a particular message to teachers. It creates a clear link between consultants and the classroom practice of individual teachers. It does not, in other words, assume that teachers can be exposed to new ideas and take them back to their classrooms. Change in instructional practice involves working through problems of practice with peers and experts, observation of practice, and steady accumulation over time of new practices anchored in one's own classroom setting.

The consulting model is labor intensive, in that it relies on extensive involvement by a consultant with individuals and small groups of teachers, repeatedly over time, around a limited set of instructional problems. Connecting professional development with teaching practice in this direct way, then, requires making a choice at the district level to invest resources intensively rather than using them to provide low-impact activities spread across a larger numbers of teachers. The approach also implies a long-term commitment to instructional improvement in a given content area. In order to reach large numbers of teachers with the District 2 consulting model, district- and school-level priorities for professional development have to stay focused on a given content area — in this case literacy and math — over several years, so that consultants have the time to engage teachers repeatedly across a number of schools in a given year and then expand their efforts to other schools in successive years. District 2 has been involved in a concerted instructional improvement effort using the consulting model in literacy for about eight years, and in mathematics for about four years, although in math the consulting model has only been in operation for about two years. Labor-intensive strategies like the consulting model have to include consistent focus over a number of years, rather than shifting priorities every year, in order to have a large cumulative impact.

Intervisitation and Peer Networks

A third form of professional development in District 2 is a heavy reliance on peer networks and visits to other sites, inside and outside the district, designed to bring teachers and principals into contact with exemplary practices. Intervisitation, as it is called in the district, and peer consultations are routine parts of the district's daily life.

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Teachers will often visit each others' classrooms in conjunction with consultants' visits, either to observe one of their peers teaching a lesson or a consultant teaching a demonstration lesson. Likewise, groups of teachers will often visit another school, inside or outside the district, in preparation for the development of a new set of instructional practices. Usually, principals initiate these outside visits and travel with teachers. In addition, principals engage in intervisitations with peers in other schools. New principals are paired with "buddies," who are usually more senior administrators, and they often spend a day or two each month in their first two years in their buddy's school. Groups of teachers and principals working on district initiatives travel to other districts inside and outside the city to observe specific instructional practices. And monthly district-wide principals' meetings are held on site in schools and often involve principals observing individual teachers in their peers' schools as part of a structured agenda for discussing some aspect of instructional improvement. Principals are encouraged to use visits and peer advising as management strategies for teachers within their buildings. A principal who is having trouble getting a particular teacher engaged in improvement might be advised by the district staff to pair that teacher with another teacher in the building, or another building in the district. Likewise, principals themselves might be encouraged to consult with other principals on specific areas where they are having difficulties.

Intervisitations and peer advising as professional development activities tend to blend into the day-to-day management of the district. The district budgets resources to support about 300 days of professional time to be allocated to intervisitation activities. Many such activities aren't captured by these budgeted resources, since they occur informally among individuals on an ad hoc basis.

A specific example serves to illustrate how professional development and management blend together around peer advising and intervisitation. An elementary principal who is in the last year of her probationary period and is considered to be an exemplar by district personnel, described off-handedly that she had visited regularly, throughout her probationary period, with two other principals in the district. She is currently involved in a principals' support group that meets regularly with three other principals, and she provides support to her former assistant principal who was recruited to take over another school as an interim acting principal. In addition, this principal has led several groups of teachers from her school to observe teaching of reading and writing in university settings and in other schools in the city. She has attended summer staff development institutes in literacy and math with teachers from her school, and, in the ensuing school year, she taught a series of demonstration lessons in the classrooms of teachers in her schools to work out the complexities of implementing new instructional strategies. She speaks of these activities as part of her rou-

tine administrative responsibility as a principal, rather than as specific professional development activities.

Another example of how peer advising and intervisitation models come together in the routine business of the district is the monthly principals' conferences. Most districts have regularly scheduled meetings of principals, typically organized by elementary and secondary levels. These routine meetings usually deal primarily with administrative business and hardly ever with specific instructional issues. In District 2, regular principals' meetings — frequently called principals' conferences — are primarily organized around instructional issues and only incidentally around routine administrative business, and they often take place in schools. For example, one recent principals' conference took place in a school. As part of the meeting principals were asked to visit classrooms, observe demonstration lessons, and use a protocol to observe and analyze classroom practice. Another recent principals' conference occurred at New York's Museum of Modern Art. The theme was the development and implementation of standards for evaluating students' academic work. The conference consisted of a brief introductory discussion of District 2's activities around standards by superintendent Alvarado, an overview of standards work by the standards coordinator, Denise Levine, and a principal, Frank DeStefano, who has taken a leadership role in developing standards in his school, a series of small-group discussions of an article about standards by Lauren Resnick, an analysis by small groups of participants of a collection of vignettes of student work around standards, and an observation of the museum's education programs. Discussion of routine administrative business occupied less than 30 minutes at the end of seven-hour meeting. (See Appendix B for meeting agenda)

Off-Site Training

District 2 offers extensive off-site training, both in the summer and during the school year. This form of training is most like what school districts typically think of as professional development, although it is distinctive in the way it is organized and delivered. A typical array of summer institutes, during the summer of 1995, included three levels of mathematics training for elementary teachers, training in elementary social studies, sessions on the development and implementation of standards and curriculum frameworks, mathematics and literacy institutes for middle-school teachers, and an advanced literacy institute for experienced teachers.

Much of the planning that precedes off-site training occurs at the school level. Each school receives money to plan its staff development agenda for the coming year. School staffs work out an agenda for summer staff development and integrate it with support for teachers during the school year. These school-level plans are then integrated into a district-wide plan for summer institutes.

District 2 administrators have a distinctive point of view about off-site training. In the words of Bea Johstone, "Summer institutes don't make any sense unless you have the resources to support direct assistance to teachers during the school year." In other words, off-site training provides teachers with access to new ideas and with stimulation to try new instructional practices, but the district does not expect it to result in extensive changes in teachers' practice if it is not supported by direct assistance in the classroom and the school.

In addition, the district looks at its off-site training as a continuous investment in a few strands of content-focused training over a long term, designed to have a cumulative impact on teachers within the district. The largest proportion of funds spent on off-site training goes to district initiatives that have been in place over a number of years — at least eight years in literacy, and four or five years in math. Focusing on the same content areas over multiple years means that progressively greater numbers of teachers are introduced to new conceptions of teaching in specific content areas and that these teachers, along with their principals, who also attend the training, create the demand for more intensive consulting services and for other forms of professional development like peer advice and intervisitation. The central idea, then, is not to provide training in the innovation *du jour,* or whatever the prevailing new instructional idea is in any given year, but to provide continuous support for larger and larger numbers of teachers to learn to teach new content at increasingly higher levels of complexity in a few select areas.

A final distinctive feature of District 2's use of off-site training is that participation in summer institutes involves a complex balancing of district and school-site priorities. As we shall see later, staff development funds, including money for off-site training, are officially allocated to schools to be spent in accordance with school-site professional development plans. Yet off-site services are contracted for and provided by the district. So decisions about what kind of content to offer at what level for what target populations of teachers involve a complex by-play between school and district personnel. The district sets the overall priorities for what content areas will be the focus of off-site professional development, and it does so in accordance with a multiyear strategy for involving progressively greater numbers of teachers in content-focused training. In any given year, schools are asked to estimate the level of demand they will have for summer programs as part of their professional development planning and the district decides, on the basis of those estimates, how much of which kind of training to provide in a given summer.

Oversight and Principal Site Visits

A final element of District 2's professional development strategy involves routine oversight of schools. Alvarado and Fink form a team whose primary focus is continuous monitoring of schools' progress toward instructional improvement. Fink and Johnstone spend at least two days per week visiting schools, often more when there are special problems that need to be addressed. They make at least one formal review of each school in the district at least once per year. Alvarado maintains a schedule with the goal of visiting each school at least once each year, in addition to the many occasions when he is in schools for regular events like principals' conferences.

The centerpiece of oversight and performance review is the Supervisory Goals and Objectives process. Each year each principal completes a plan that lays out his or her objectives for the year and specific plans and activities for achieving those objectives. These plans form the basis for the performance reviews and school visits. District staff set the structure for the plans, which focuses almost exclusively on instructional improvement in specific content areas: literacy, science, math, interdisciplinary studies, bilingual/English as a Second Language, and parental involvement. Most of the content of the plans deals with the use of various forms of professional development to meet instructional goals. So, in effect, the plans are a description of how professional development will be deployed in the school around the principal's instructional objectives.

The other major component of oversight and performance review are the formal visits that Alvarado and Fink make to schools. The visits are usually, but not always, announced in advance. They consist of a conversation with the principal about specific issues in the school, a walk-through and a visit to several classrooms, a debriefing discussion with the principal that focuses on specific actions, and a letter from Fink that describes the results of the visit and the agreed-upon actions.

In addition to these formal visits, Fink and Johnstone make myriad informal visits to schools. In schools where there are interim acting principals (principals who are filling temporary vacancies) or recently appointed principals, Fink and Johnstone often visit frequently and pay special attention to orchestrating intervisitations and mentor relationships. Schools that, for one reason or another, are seen as problematic get more informal attention than those that are seen as doing well.

Alvarado says of this process, "I think it has had a substantial effect on getting our philosophy of instructional improvement across. If you contrast the principals' plans of four years ago with the plans they did this year, the thing that stands out is how much more detail there is about specific instructional improvement and how much more

sophisticated they (the principals) are in the strategies they're using" (Interview, 10/25/95).

Indeed, there is substantial evidence in plans (see, for example, Appendices C & D) that principals are focusing much of their time and energy on decisions about how to use professional development to meet their instructional objectives. There is also evidence that the emphasis on specific content areas in the planning document has the effect of focusing principals' attention on how to improve instruction, rather than on general goals having to do with the structure and climate of the school. In other words, asking principals what they are doing about the improvement of instruction, not surprisingly, has the effect of focusing their attention on instruction.

Another effect of the oversight and performance review process is that district staff get to know a lot about schools. Alvarado says, "After you've been at this for several years, you know who the particularly strong or weak teachers are, or the teachers who are on the verge of big changes in their practice, and you can make a bee-line for those classrooms when you visit. A lot of this comes from the principals themselves; they tell us where their problems and successes are in order to get help in figuring out what to do. So we get to know a tremendous amount about what's going on inside schools and that is very helpful in shaping our ideas about what we need to do at this level to support instructional change" (Interview, 10/25/95).

How the Strategy Developed and Where It's Going

In the interest of clarity, I've chosen to express District 2's strategy for instructional improvement and professional development as a set of six organizing principles and five major activities. I hasten to add that this is not necessarily the way people in District 2 think about the strategy. My formulation has a static quality to it — it consists of lists of ideas and actions taking place at one point in time. People working in District 2 have a somewhat different view of the strategy. They view the strategy as a loosely connected, constantly evolving set of activities held together by a single common theme of instructional improvement. They don't see themselves as executing a prescribed plan, but rather as pursuing a complex set of possibilities related to the theme of instructional improvement. All of the major activities are in a constant state of flux— new content areas get added, consultants shift in and out of particular schools, proposals get made for new activities, new themes get added on to the agenda.

The strategy did not spring full-blown from Alvarado's head. In fact, as noted earlier, he began only with a basic idea about how to induce system-wide change using professional development and a strong view of the limits of his prior strategy in District 4. Most of the activities that evolved from Alvarado's idea of system-wide instruction-

al improvement were ones that he did not anticipate at the beginning. Most of them, he freely admits, were the result of other peoples' creativity in responding to his challenge.

Though the development of the strategy involved a great deal of improvisation and opportunism, a few stable themes emerge. One important theme that has implications for other systemic change efforts is the phased introduction of instructional changes, organized mainly around content areas. District 2's approach began with reading and writing because this focus provided a readily available way for the district to demonstrate improvement in academic performance in an area that was important on city-wide assessment measures and because literacy was important in the context of the district's linguistic and ethnic diversity. As district staff, consultants, and principals learned how to change teaching practice through the literacy initiative, Alvarado began a parallel effort in mathematics, using the same model, but adapting it to learning from the literacy initiative and to the current fiscal realities of the district. Recently, the district has begun another set of initiatives, including the development of middle schools and the development of standards to be used in assessing student work. These activities assume most of the characteristics of earlier improvement efforts and reinforce their organizing principles.

This approach represents a particular solution to the puzzle of systemic change. It is not the only solution, by any means, but one worth understanding. It stems from the recognition that systemic change can't occur simultaneously in all parts of the system at once. Nor is it possible to ask teachers to change their practice on all dimensions simultaneously — in, for example, reading, writing, math, science, social studies, etc. The strategy suggests, however, that it is possible to create the expectation that system-wide changes can occur in certain domains and that, over time, these changes can reach progressively more content areas and more teachers. The strategy also suggests that people in the system will learn important lessons about how to change teaching practice in the early stages that they can use to work more effectively in the later stages. So what's systemic about the strategy is not that it tries to change all dimensions of teaching practice at once, but that it sets in motion a process for making changes in teaching practice and it creates the expectation that these changes will reach deeply and broadly in the system.

Another major theme in the development of the strategy is the intentional blurring of the boundaries between management of the system and the activities of staff development. As noted above, most school systems treat staff development as a discrete, specialized, centrally administered function. In District 2, staff development is management, and vice versa. That is, management is about marshalling resources in support of instructional improvement and staff development is the vehicle by which that occurs.

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Accountability within the system is expressed in terms of teachers' and principals' objectives for instructional improvement, and the idiom of management is instruction. Principals' conferences are organized around discussion and inquiry about instruction, rather than routine administrative matters. Principals write their annual objectives in terms of specific attempts to improve instruction in specific content domains, not in terms of generalized ideas about such things as improving school climate, keeping the hallways clean, and keeping parents happy. District and school-level budget priorities are expressed in terms of expenditures on instructional consultants, substitute teachers, and access to workshops that lead to changes in instruction, rather than in terms of general line items or functional categories. In other words, management is operationally defined as helping teachers to do their work better and work is defined in terms of teaching and learning.

A third theme of the strategy is a complex and evolving balance between central authority and school-site autonomy. As we have seen, and as we shall see in more detail shortly, Alvarado has pushed steadily to lodge more and more budget and administrative responsibility at the school level, largely in the hands of principals. At the same time, his strategy of instructional improvement requires principals and teachers to share a common view that their jobs are fundamentally about improving instruction and to accept some discipline in the way resources get focused on specific content areas and issues. In the absence of this discipline, the strategy would consist of schools improvising on the theme of instructional improvement with little or no cumulative, systemwide impact on teaching and learning in specific content domains. So Alvarado and his district staff walk a fine line — as we shall see, not always successfully — between exerting discipline and focus on districtwide instructional priorities, on the one hand, and encouraging principals and teachers to take the initiative in devising their own strategies and plans, on the other. The major point, I think, is that there is no such thing as a wholly "centralized" or wholly "decentralized" strategy for systemic instructional improvement. Any systemic strategy has to involve discipline and focus at the center and a relatively high degree of discretion within certain parameters in the schools. The ingredient that holds this complex arrangement together is common agreement on the centrality of staff development as a mechanism for instructional improvement.

A fourth, related theme in the development of the strategy is that district administrators are unapologetic about exercising control in areas that are central to the success of the strategy. The most prominent example of this theme is the way Alvarado and his staff have handled the replacement of principals. As noted above, Alvarado has replaced more than 20 principals in a system of roughly 30 schools since he became superintendent eight years ago. This turnover was the result, in part, of principals self-selecting out of the district and in part the result of the introduction of strong incentives

from the central administration for senior principals to retire. In order for a decentralized strategy for instructional improvement to work, and in order for principals to accept a view that management equals the improvement of instruction, the system had to be able to select, hire, and retain principals on the basis of their aptitude for and agreement with the district's overall strategy. So Alvarado and his staff have focused what would be seen in most school systems as an inordinate amount of attention on recruitment of principals, on the grooming of emerging leaders within the district for principalships, on the creation of support networks for acting and probationary principals, and on the creation of norms that principals are to participate along with teachers in staff-development activities dealing with content-focused instruction. The reason for this attention is that Alvarado sees the principalship as the linchpin of his systemic strategy and he recognizes that if he can't influence who becomes a principal in the system, he can't decentralize and get the results he wants.

This attitude toward the centrality of personnel decisions has begun to permeate, in turn, principals' attitudes toward the hiring of teachers. Most of the principals we interviewed in the system said spontaneously, without any prompting, that the key determinant of their capacity to meet their school-level objectives was the quality of their teachers and that they had learned how to exercise more influence on the process of recruiting, hiring, nurturing, retaining, and firing, or counseling-out, of teachers in their schools.

Another example of the theme of central control of key elements of the strategy has to do with the hiring of external consultants. A central part of the district's strategy for instructional improvement is finding expertise that is consistent with the strategy and bringing it into the system. In a highly decentralized system, schools would make their own judgments about the specific consultants they would use to meet their objectives. District 2's strategy evolved along different lines. District staff recruit and select external consultants and evaluate their performance on the basis of how well they are able to work with principals and teachers. School staff select from the available array of consultants and deploy them according to their internal priorities. This use of central authority is calculated to lend focus, coherence, and discipline to a relatively decentralized process.

A fifth and final theme of District 2's strategy is consistency of focus over time. Most districts' staff development activities reflect district priorities in any given year, and these priorities often shift in response to changes in policy at the local or state level, curricular fads or fashions of the moment, and the multiple demands of various school- and district-level constituencies. The logic of District 2's strategy, as noted above, requires a long-term focus on a few important instructional priorities. The strategy

depends on reaching teachers directly in their classrooms through a labor-intensive consulting model and on using routine processes of management and oversight to educate principals and teachers to the centrality of their role in instructional improvement. Reaching large numbers of teachers and principals in this way requires time — time to deliver the professional development required to change teaching practice and time to learn and adapt to new expectations. If instructional priorities vary much over time, then the effect of the strategy is dissipated. Hence, the strategy focuses on specific content areas, adding new areas as the process of changing practice matures in a given area, and on using routine management and oversight to continuously call attention to the centrality of instructional improvement.

Alvarado and his staff see at least three major themes emerging for the future of professional development and instructional improvement in the district. The first of these centers on standards and assessment. District 2 was recently selected to participate in a national network of school systems engaged in systemic reform, and as part of that effort, to participate in the piloting of standards for student learning and new forms of student assessment. In addition, the district has formed an alliance with the University of Pittsburgh's new Institute for Learning, which also has as its focus the introduction of standards-based curriculum and assessment.

Alvarado sees this emerging emphasis on standards as a logical extension of his past efforts at instructional improvement. "At some point in the process," he says, "you have to begin to ask the question, 'How do we know we're doing well by the kids?' and the only way you can answer that question is by getting agreement on what kids should know and be able to do and starting to assess their learning in some systematic way" (Interview, 11/15/95). Alvarado thought that introducing the standards and assessment issue before principals and teachers who had extensive experience with instructional improvement would have been a mistake. "You can kill a lot of the learning that you need in the system by insisting that it all has to line up with some item on a test," he says. On the other hand, he thinks standards and assessment are logical extensions of his heavy emphasis on professional development as a mechanism of instructional improvement. "Professional development costs a lot of money, and sooner or later we're going to have to say what we've gotten for what we've invested in people," he says. "I want to have some control over the terms on which we make that judgment" (Interview, 11/15/95).

The second theme for future development is dealing with schools that, for one reason or another, have lagged behind others in the district in instructional improvement. In some cases, district staff observe, schools lag because their principals are not fully engaged in the district-wide agenda. In some cases, they lag because they do not have access to the right array of resources to meet their needs. And in some cases the schools have recently organized new

leadership, and teachers are adapting to new expectations. In the 1995-96 school year, district staff formed a network within a district of the seven schools that have the highest number of children performing in the lowest quartile of the city-wide reading test. These schools receive extra scrutiny and support from the district, and their principals convene to share ideas about instructional improvement.

A third theme for future development is moving the instructional improvement strategy more explicitly into the middle grades. Because the district strategy initially formed around the improvement of literacy in the early grades, the schools that were most intensely involved at the outset were elementary schools with high proportions of poor and language-minority children. As the strategy expanded to include more and more schools, it focused again at the elementary level. Now the system is coming to terms with the fact that cohorts of children are moving into the middle grades who have had a distinctive kind of instruction in the elementary grades and the junior high schools are not necessarily prepared to capitalize on these children's knowledge and skills. About two years ago, the district started to emphasize instructional improvement in the middle grades and to develop middle schools, grades six through nine. District staff admit that this part of the strategy is developing slowly and that they are still learning about the unique conditions for instructional improvement in the middle grades.

Financial Resources

Staff development requires money. Finding money to support professional development is usually difficult, since state and local policy makers often see training as an expendable budget item when they are struggling to cover increasing salary and facilities costs in the face of constant or declining revenues. Under conditions of scarce resources, policy makers are probably inclined to view professional development more as a professional perquisite than as a major force for improving performance of teachers and students. District 2 probably spends more money on staff development per capita than other districts and probably allocates a larger share of its district budget for this purpose, although it's impossible to prove this hypothesis since districts don't maintain comparable data on their staff development expenditures. How much does District 2's strategy cost? Where is the source of financial resources? How are they spent? District 2 does a better job than most school systems of keeping track of what it budgets for professional development, although, as we shall see, it is still difficult to estimate the exact costs of the strategy even when the budget data are relatively accurate.

One key tenet of Alvarado's strategy is to make professional development visible in the district budget and to commit the district to spending a specific proportion of the budget — around 3 percent — as an expression of the priority the district attaches to professional development. Table 1 shows the relationship between budgeted profes-

sional development costs and the total district budget over the last three fiscal years. This approach generates somewhere between two million and three million dollars in revenue annually for professional development. As we shall see shortly, these budgeted costs cover mainly direct expenditures on salaries, contracts, and materials related to the delivery of professional development. These budgeted costs do not cover myriad other costs associated with the strategy — for example, the time the principals and teachers spend during the regular instructional day working with each other or with consultants on the improvement of teaching, the networking activities that principals engage in as part of their regular administrative duties, and much of the district-level overhead associated with administering the strategy. So the 3 percent figure is, more likely than not, an underestimate of the actual costs of the strategy. Still, by calling attention to the district's commitment to professional development, focusing a specific proportion of the budget and holding the system to that commitment communicates the importance of professional development to key constituencies in the district.

Table 1

Budgeted Expenditures for Professional Development as Proportion of Total Budgeted Expenditures, Fiscal Year 1994-96

	FY94	FY95	FY96
A. Professional Development	$2.3 million	$2.7 million	$2.3 million
B. Total Budget	$77 million	$84.6 million	$83.5 million
C. A/B	2.9%	3.2%	2.8%

Table 2

Multipocket Budgeting: Selected Budgeted Revenue Sources for Professional Development, Fiscal Year 1994-96 (in millions)

	FY94	FY95	FY96
Tax Levy (local)	$1.1	$.730	$.163
Special Ed. (federal)	$.125	$.088	$.00
Chapter I/Title I (federal)	$.251	$.409	$.714
PCEN/PCEN-LEP ( )	$.179	$.139	$.457
Chapter 2 (federal)	$.084	$.060	$.00
Chapter 53 ( )	$.224	$.711	$.504
Title VII (federal)	$.055	$.067	$.00
Magnet (state, federal)	$.099	$.223	$.00

Table 3

Budgeted Expenditures by Function, Fiscal Year 1994-96

	FY94	FY95	FY96
Teacher Compensation	$1,100,605	$787,733	$234,118
Contracted Services	$259,500	$933,910	$1,279,532
Professional Development Lab	$233,860	$275,000	$225,000
Materials	$98,676	$98,045	$34,628

To generate the revenue required to meet this commitment, Alvarado and his staff engage in what is called in administrative circles "multipocket budgeting." Essentially, multipocket budgeting consists of orchestrating multiple sources of revenue around a single priority to produce the maximum amount of revenue available for that purpose. Table 2 gives a snapshot, albeit incomplete, of how multipocket budgeting works in District 2. In effect, District 2 staff treat revenue from a variety of sources — including local tax revenues, federal categorical programs (Title 1, special education), and state categorical programs (magnet schools) — as being available for use in the district's professional development strategy, as long as the uses of the money are consistent with the requirements of the program. This approach amounts, in effect, to functional budgeting of multiple revenue sources, or analyzing income from various sources in terms of its availability for use in the district's strategy of instructional improvement. Table 2 also gives a picture of how sensitive the district's strategy is to the availability of outside sources of revenue, and how careful the district has to be in orchestrating revenue from multiple sources around its own priorities. Amounts of money available fluctuate considerably from year to year.

Table 3 gives an estimate of how the money available for professional development is spent. Teacher Compensation represents the on-budget costs of the compensated time teachers spend in professional development activities and compensation for substitute teachers who replace teachers in the classroom while they are engaged in professional development activities. The Contracted Services item in the budget represents the cost of consulting services, either in the form of direct delivery of instructional support to teachers and work with groups of teachers in schools or in the form of summer workshops. In recent years, the district has shifted costs toward consulting services and away from summer workshops by opening up participation in summer workshops to teachers from other districts, which, in effect, subsidizes the participation of District 2 teachers. The budget item Professional Development Laboratory represents administrative costs for oversight of the program and compensation for Adjunct Teachers who replace Visiting Teachers while they are with Resident Teachers. And the Materials item represents costs of materials purchased for direct use by teachers in training.

As noted above, it is difficult to infer from these budget figures either what the actual cost of the District 2 professional development strategy is or how much more District 2 spends on professional development than a comparable district without this strategy. The numbers do, however, give a rough picture of the priority professional development represents in the district's budget, the use of multipocket budgeting to generate revenue for the district's strategy, and the cost structure of the strategy.

The View from the Schools

Also noted above, District 2's strategy involves a complex and evolving set of relationships between central administrators and school staff. On the one hand, Alvarado places a high priority on shifting major responsibilities for budget and instructional decisions to the school level. Over the past three years, for example, he has moved from a system of central office control over all professional development expenditures to one in which schools are allocated a lump sum for professional development that they decide how to spend in accordance with a school site plan. District 2's approach to management and oversight of principals also stresses the central role that principals play in developing and implementing their own priorities. On the other hand, the district maintains a strong hand in certain domains that are central to the success of the strategy. The district decides who the contract consultants are who will deliver instructional support services. District personnel oversee and review principals' priorities and pay regular visits to schools and classrooms to review principals' progress. And the district has developed a strategy for focusing attention on instructional improvement in low-performing schools. So the District 2 strategy has elements of both decentralization and centralization. On the decentralization side, the strategy has a heavy focus on school-site decision making related to specific decisions about which teachers will receive training and support, which content areas will receive attention and which consultants will be employed over a specific period, and on orchestrating professional networks around specific school issues. On the centralization side, the strategy places major responsibility with central staff for deciding which instructional areas will receive priority attention, on maintaining the focus on these areas, on forming and maintaining relationships with consultants who deliver training and support in these priority areas, and on keeping school-site decisions focused on districtwide priorities.

Not surprisingly, such a complex division of labor produces a variety of responses from school staff. One response might be characterized as "hearing footsteps." Principals are, almost uniformly, at least among those with whom we spoke, acutely aware that they are responsible for professional development and instructional improvement in their schools and that this responsibility runs to making assessments of individual teachers' competencies and capacities and matching these teachers with available resources. Principals are also aware that district staff pay attention, often in detailed ways, to what they are doing in their schools to foster instructional improvement. They perceive that some principals receive greater attention and scrutiny than others, but those who receive less scrutiny still give high visibility to district-level priorities.Visits from district staff are often viewed with some trepidation. More experienced principals often coach less experienced ones about how to prepare for and par-

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ticipate in the "walk-through" that district staff conduct periodically in schools. Principals report feeling challenged by district staff — sometimes unfairly, they feel — about the practices of specific teachers in their schools. Most principals view these walk-throughs, and their accompanying reviews and debriefings by district staff as constructive; some view them as less than helpful; all view them unambiguously as influential in shaping their thinking about their work. However principals respond to the attention they receive from central staff, they "hear footsteps."

Likewise, principals respond in a variety of ways to the increased control over professional development funds they are receiving. Many of the principals we spoke with saw little real difference between the previously centralized approach and the more recent decentralized approach. They argue that they always negotiated with district staff both about how to spend budgeted resources and how to get extra resources for activities they wanted to pursue that weren't budgeted. This negotiation continues, they say, and they feel they generally get what they need from it. A few principals chafe at what they regard as a contradiction in the district's strategy: Principals have discretion over professional development funds as long as they focus on district-approved activities and priorities, but they don't have discretion if they propose to spend the money on activities that district staff feel don't fall within their priorities. In most instances, though, principals understand that they have considerable latitude as long as they have a reasonably clear set of priorities in their annual plans, and as long as they can demonstrate that they are making progress with individual teachers in line with those priorities. They also understand that, if they take advantage of the professional networks available to them in the district and of the opportunities available to interact with Alvarado and his staff, they will get access to the opportunities they need to demonstrate success in their schools. The District 2 strategy sends a strong signal to principals that if they work in concert with others, rather than in isolation, they will get access to the resources necessary to do their jobs well.

For the most part, school staff did not report being overwhelmed by district initiatives, as school people are in many districts with aggressive, entrepreneurial leaders. They report feeling pressure to perform well and to demonstrate what they are doing. They report feeling that they are held to much higher expectations for performance than their peers in other districts, although usually without seeing these expectations as negative. They sometimes report experiencing difficulty in meeting the expectations that district staff communicate and sometimes feeling that district staff don't demonstrate sufficient appreciation of the special problems of their schools. But they do not report being confused about district priorities, receiving conflicting or mixed signals about which specific activities they should be focusing on, or getting sideswiped or ambushed by shifting district priorities.

Most principals and teachers with whom we spoke reported that they were gratified, energized, and generally enthusiastic, if sometimes a bit intimidated, by the attention they received through District 2's professional development strategy. They report attending professional development activities outside the district or conducting visits to other schools and districts and being impressed with the amount of attention that teaching and learning receive in District 2. Teachers from outside the district who attend District 2-sponsored summer professional development activities often report that they have heard that the district is the place to be if you are interested in good teaching, and they comment favorably on the range of professional development activities available to District 2 teachers and principals. Outsiders also comment on the (to them) unusual practice of principals attending content-centered professional development activities with teachers from their schools. For the most part, then, teachers seem to be aware that District 2 provides a range of opportunities that would not be available if they were teaching elsewhere, and they seem to value those activities.

Lessons and Issues

I began this paper by noting that educational reformers increasingly express skepticism about whether local school districts can play a constructive role in school improvement. One response to this skepticism is to focus on the role that local districts can play in mobilizing resources to support sustained improvement in teaching practice. The District 2 case provides compelling evidence that local districts can play an active and influential role in this area. Furthermore, the case demonstrates that local districts may have certain "natural" advantages in supporting sustained instructional improvement through professional development: Districts can achieve economies of scale in acquiring the services of consultants; they can introduce strong incentives for principals and teachers to pay attention to the improvement of teaching in specific domains; they can create opportunities for interaction among professionals that schools might not be able to do by themselves; and they can make creative use of multipocket budgeting to generate resources to focus on instructional improvement. District 2, then, can be seen as proof that local districts can play a strong role in instructional improvement through staff development, perhaps a role that other entities can't play with the same effectiveness.

However, it is also clear that very few districts currently play this role and that very few local administrators have the knowledge, managerial skill, or apparent interest that is required to play this role well. The existence of one good example doesn't necessarily mean that other examples will follow.

What seems to distinguish District 2 from other districts I have visited is, first, that it has a specific strategy focused on the improvement of teaching; second, that the strat-

egy has as its goal the sustained improvement of teaching practice, not just in a few select places; and third, that the strategy permeates all aspects of the district's organization, including routine management and oversight, budgeting and resources allocation, and district policy. In other words, what distinguishes District 2's strategy is that it makes instructional improvement through staff development the central purpose and rationale for the district's role. Beneath this overarching commitment lie myriad specific decisions about the organization of district staff, the creation of a set of operating principles, the development of specific activities that demonstrate these principles, and the development of a managerial and budgetary infrastructure that supports and reinforces the principles and activities. The specific principles, activities, and supporting structures could, one imagines, differ considerably from one setting to another, depending on the skills, resources, and constraints that operate in any given setting. What seems important in the case of District 2 is the willingness of Alvarado and his staff to follow the implications of their interest in instructional improvement into a specific set of principles, activities, and structures, and to inspire a lot of problem-solving activity in the district around these ideas. It may be less important for other districts to imitate what District 2 is doing than for them to shift the purposes and activities of the system to focus more centrally on instructional improvement and sustain that commitment long enough for people in the system to begin to internalize it and to start engaging in problem-solving consistent with it.

There are, to be sure, special circumstances in District 2 that might not apply in other school districts: Alvarado's experience, energy, and tenacity; the district's relatively small scale and relatively focused responsibility for only elementary and junior high schools; the extraordinary diversity and resources of the community surrounding the district; and the special circumstances that allowed the district to replace most of its principals and a large proportion of its teachers over a relatively short period. But there are also other circumstances that make District 2 an instructive case for other districts: The extraordinary diversity of its student population, its resource levels and revenue sources, and its relatively conventional governance and administrative structure. It seems unlikely that any other district will confront circumstances identical to those that Alvarado confronted in District 2, but it also seems plausible that any district could engage in something like the process of bringing district resources into alignment around instructional improvement that occurred in District 2. It is less the context that distinguishes District 2 from other districts than it is what Alvarado and his staff have done to mobilize the resources and authority available to them to shape the district's purposes, activities, and structures.

I have been at pains to say throughout that Alvarado and his staff view their strategy of instructional improvement through staff development to be a constantly

evolving set of ideas and actions, not a fixed plan. Consistent with this view, I would like to conclude by calling attention to a few unresolved issues that the District 2 strategy poses.

The first of these is the issue of systemic change and how it occurs. Alvarado has self-consciously taken a systemic view in the sense that his goal is continuous improvement of teaching practice in all schools and classrooms across all areas of the curriculum. The strategy explicitly avoids focusing on selected sites or on small-scale projects that are not designed to influence practice on a large scale. The central dilemma of the strategy, as I described earlier, is that in order to change teaching practice on a broad scale, you have to first focus efforts in ways that make it possible for teachers to learn to teach in new ways. District 2 has focused its efforts on changing teaching practice in specific content areas, and then, expanding the scale of its efforts by increasing the number of content areas and grade levels as well as expanding the number of teachers exposed to new practices. Teachers can't change everything at once, nor can districts mandate changes in teaching practice by simply telling teachers to teach differently. District 2's solution to changing teaching practice is to create systemic change by deliberately expanding the numbers of teachers and principals introduced to new practices. As noted above, this approach requires the district to stay focused on a limited number of objectives for instructional practice over a long time.

Having said this, though, it is unclear from observing District 2 just how long it will take to reach all teachers and principals in all areas of the curriculum. In the literacy area, where the district has about eight years' experience with the strategy, there is ample anecdotal evidence that it has had extensive effects on teaching practice in virtually all elementary schools. It is less clear what the district would regard as a satisfactory level of practice and what proportion of teachers have reached that standard of practice. The same issue arises in mathematics, where the strategy has been under way for only two ways of teaching. Finally, there are certain areas of the curriculum — social studies, for example — where only small amounts of activity have occurred. What seems clear, then, is that even though District 2's strategy poses a reasonable solution to the problem of systemic change of teaching practice, the district has a long way to go to meet its goal of system wide continuous improvement of practice. The case of District 2 demonstrates, I think, just how big a commitment it is to aspire to changing teaching practice across the curriculum in all classrooms. District 2 will continue to be an important laboratory for understanding what it means to engage in systemic change.

A second issue arises out of the increasing necessity for Alvarado and his staff to justify their emphasis on ambitious, relatively expensive, and labor-intensive approaches to instructional improvement in the face of increasingly scarce

resources. District 2 staff have begun to address this issue by beginning to develop standards for evaluating student work that are consistent with the changes in instruction that the district is promoting, by participating in a network of school districts that is working on using new forms of student assessment, and by developing the district's capacity to assess changes in practice and their relationship to changes in student performance. It seems apparent that as teachers, parents, board members, and external policy makers begin to understand how much sustained attention it takes to engage in systemic, continuous improvement, they will gain the ability to ask harder questions about whether the costs can be justified in terms of improved student performance and whether the improvements are taking place fast enough in enough classrooms and schools to make system-wide improvement a plausible goal. These expectations have to be met head-on with new forms of information about changes in teaching practice and their relationship to student learning. Otherwise, the district will have difficulty justifying the strategy.

A third issue has to be with continuity and stability over time. The story of educational reform in the United States is, for the most part, a story of nervous movement from one fad to another with little enduring effect on teaching practice (Tyack and Cuban, 1995; Elmore, 1996). Most schools and school districts have adapted to this view of change by adopting whatever the innovation *du jour* is at any given moment, investing their resources in spreading it among schools and classrooms without serious attention to its effect on the fundamentals of teaching practice, and then abandoning it when the next one comes along. District 2 has taken a much different approach by focusing on the fundamentals of teaching practice in a few select content areas and using staff development to reach directly into classrooms and schools in a sustained way that is designed to influence how teachers and students interact around content. In order for this approach to work on a systemic scale, the school district has to stay focused on a few content areas with an evolving set of staff development activities for a long period. This commitment to sustained change requires district policy makers and high-level administrators to sustain an unusual degree of focus and to actively buffer the district from external influences that make it difficult to stay focused. District 2 seems to have demonstrated that focus is possible over a period of time in which most districts would have switched reform agendas two or three times. Whether the district can stay focused long enough to reach all classrooms and schools across all content areas remains to be seen. Continuity and depth of district leadership, the creation of enduring networks and structures that connect teachers and principals, stability in the commitment of resources to key professional development activities, and attention to demonstrating the impact of changes in teaching practice on student performance are all factors that could contribute to stability and focus over time.

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Appendix A

Lucy Mahon's Schedule

	Wednesday, Nov. 8th	Thursday, Nov. 9th	Friday, Nov. 10th
1st	Meet with Alex Gerson in room 501	Meet with Alex Gerson in room 501	Meet with Alex Gerson in room 501
2nd	Place Value in room 201 - Yokell Schmidt to observe Dubin to observe	3rd Grade Meeting in room 321 Medina, Lambert, Ernst, Roebuck to attend	Geometry in room 319 - Casey Jaffe to observe Bezzone to observe
3rd	Demo in room 317 - Ernst Lambert to observe Medina to observe Roebuck to observe	Demo in room 220 - Fenstermacher Speziale to observe English to observe	Demo in room 317 - Ernst Medina to observe Roebuck to observe
4th	Meet with Yokell in room 201 to discuss lesson (Lucy eats lunch during the meeting)	Place Value in room 201 - Yokell Green to observe Schmidt to observe Carabott to observe	1st Grade Meeting in room 219 Dubin, Roche-Albert, Hsu, Lockwood, Entenberg, DiBrienza, to attend on their lunch
5th	Geometry in room 319 - Casey Bezzone to observe Jaffe to observe	2nd Grade Meeting in room 201 Schmidt, Yokell, Lampert, Carabott, Green/Ronga to attend on their lunch	Meet with Ernst in room 317 to discuss lesson Medina and Roebuck to attend during their lunch
6th	Launch Number Sense in room 219 - DiBrienza Hsu to observe Lockwood to observe	5th Grade Meeting in room 324 Goldfeder, Connors, Siegel to attend	Place Value in room 219 - DiBrienza Lockwood to observe Hsu to observe
7th	Meet with DiBrienza in rm 219 to discuss lesson Hsu to join Roche-Albert to join Entenberg to join	Kindergarten Grade Meeting in 118 Kaunitz, Fenstermacher, English, Bellin, Speziale, Santiago to attend	4th/5th Grade Meeting in 320 Jaffe, Casey, Goldfeder to attend
8th	Meet with Casey & Ernst in Teacher's Lounge to discuss lesson and geometry	School Math Team Meeting in 317 Fenstermacher, DiBrienza, Yokell, Ernst, Goldfeder, Lockwood, Casey attend	Meet with Casey to discuss lesson in 326 Bezzone to attend

ANTHONY J. ALVARADO
Superintendent

Elaine Fink
Deputy Superintendent

COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT TWO
333 Seventh Avenue
New York, New York 10001
Telephone (212) 330-9400
Fax Number (212) 330-9480

Principals Conference

November 30, 1995
8:30am - 3:30pm
District Office

AGENDA

8:30am	• Networking	
9:00am	• Welcome	Anthony J. Alvarado
9:15am	Update on: • Standards network • Teaching and Learning to Standards Project (LRDC) • Standards work in schools	 Denise Levine Frank DeStefano Heads of schools
9:45am	• Article by Lauren Resnick (in packet) Reading time Discussion time	At your tables
10:30am	BREAK	
10:45am	• Principles of Learning • Vignettes - Read and discuss each Vignette in your group - Look for evidence of the Principles of Learning	Denise Levine (20 Vignettes in packet & Principles of Learning)
11:45am	• Museum of Modern Art Collaborative Project • Overview of Museum Educational Programs	Jill Myers Museum staff
12:15pm	• Gallery Visit/Guided Discussion How Visual thinking Ties into Your Curriculum	Museum staff
1pm - 2pm	LUNCH (Museum Cafeteria on the Lobby level) (Restaurant listing in packet)	
2:00pm	• Burning Issues/Concerns Questions/Suggestions (Sign up sheet on table)	Elaine Fink Discussion Groups (Trustees Room) (Orientation Room, Lobby Level)
2:45pm	• Administrative Responsibilities re: Special Education	Barbara Gambino
3:00pm	Administrative Items	Anthony J. Alvarado

41

Our sincere thanks to
Cynthia Nachmani, Lanny Lasky and Maria Gonzalez
for sharing the Museum with District Two

December Conference - December 20, 1995 at the New School.
January Conference - January 24, 1996 at Lincoln Center.
Memo will follow.

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Appendix C

ANTHONY J. ALVARADO
Superintendent

COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT TWO
330 WEST 18th STREET
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10011
TELEPHONE (212) 337-8700
FAX NUMBER (212) 337-8796

Supervisory Goals and Objectives

1991 - 1992

Name: _____

School: _____ Position: _____

Social Security #: _____ ___ File #: _____

Date of Appointment: _____ License: ___ _____

Status (Tenured, Probationer, Acting, Other): _____

Credit: Anna Switzer, principal, P.S. 234 The Independent School, 292 Greenwich Avenue, New York, New York 10007

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Name: _____ School: _____

I. Professional Development Initiative:

A. For Staff (SBM/SDM, planning groups, staff training, collaboration, visitations, etc.)

Description of your current program:.

Progress is Collaborative
Staff is always interested in work of other Teachers
Staff generates its own issues for development

A. For Self:

Description of your current program:.

Consensus in decision making
Re which encourages growth for each Staff member

Goals & Objectives 1991/92	Plan for achieving goals/objectives
A. Teachers will be resources for each other	A. Visitations between classrooms Frequent grade meetings
B. Decision making will reflect educated input from all Staff	B. Frequent meetings + Staff discussions in all areas of school i.e. Collaborative Agenda for Staff Topics.

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Name: _____ School: _____

II. Language Initiative (include reading, writing integration of curriculum)

Description of your current program:.

ECC A strong comprehensive program of integrated language including reading- writing- + oral language

Upper Grades A strong developed program consisting of a whole language approach integrating all aspects of language into all areas of the curriculum

Goals & Objectives 1991/92	Plan for achieving goals/objectives
Children should be fluent and enjoy written and oral Language Res staff will learn how to integrate whole Language methods into the total curriculum including Social Studies, math, & Science.	Inter visitation Demonstration Conferencing Grade meetings Workshops Readings

Name: _____ _____ School: ___ _____

III Mathematics Initiative

Description of your current program:

ECC An exemplary program of hands on experiences in math leading to the formation of abstract concepts.

Upper Grades A maths based program extends to upper grades

Goals & Objectives 1991/92	Plan for achieving goals/objectives
To develop more expertise in problem solving & cooperative learning in math	Through workshops Staff Developer Discussions Demonstrations

Name: _____ School: _____

IV. Science Initiative

Description of your current program:

ECC A Hands on Approach whose direction is determined by the Social Studies and Science units and themes studied in the class room.

Upper Grades A slightly more directed + focused approach using topics outside the Social Studies curriculum as well as related to " " " "

Goals & Objectives 1991/92	Plan for achieving goals/objectives
To integrate more Science into appropriate segments of the curriculum	1. Principal support group 2. Training by Science Tchr. 3. Staff discussion

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Appendix D

Supervisory Goals & Objectives
1995-1996

Name:

School:

Position: Principal

Social Security #:

File #:

Date Of Appointment:

License:

Status:

Credit: Anna Switzer, principal, P.S. 234 The Independent School, 292 Greenwich Avenue, New York, New York 10007

Math Initiatives 1995-96

Each year our work in Cooperative Learning and Problem Solving becomes richer and deeper. We are no longer doing "Marilyn Burns" Mathematics. We have truly constructed our own work in both developing curriculum ideas and ideals for each grade as well as methodologies and instructional strategies.

It is our goal this year to continue to challenge our thinking in all 7 math strands. There is a special need for the 4/5 grade teachers to work strongly in this area since there are many new teachers on this grade. These teachers will be doing one of two things: Working with established math leaders in our school or working directly with Lucy Mahon. Lucy will be working with our staff in three areas.

1- Developing Math Leadership at
2- Building capacity throughout the school
3-Establishing a District Wide network through the internet.

Three staff members are now Marilyn Burns math consultants. If fact, all of the MBS consultants in New York are staff members at our school. Lucy Mahon is creating a structure to include new math leadership and to disseminate this leadership throughout the building.

Two of our staff are involved in a National Foundation in Science grant in Mathematics to develop math leadership over the next 5 years. These teachers work extensively with Kathy Fasno from CUNY. Kathy co-teaches with them weekly and they attend weekly seminars on mathematics at CCNY. In addition, these teachers will attend a summer institute. Next year they will in turn identify potential math leaders in our school and work with them. This will continue until approximately 20 math leaders are developed over the next 5 years.

We will continue to develop our own math assessments that are performance based, using rubrics. By helping children understand explicitly what is quality, what is a standard, and what is expected we believe our children will perform exceedingly well. We hope that these assessments with become part of their portfolios and also part of the reporting to parents.

Through the addition of a school store we hope to help provide our at-risk children with authentic opportunities to use money math. We expect that our PCEN math students (and ESL students - see bi-lingual initiative) will actually do the day to day running of the store. We intend to engage the entire school community in the store in an attempt to give children real life experiences in using data, statistics and probability; and to enlist the older children in writing and summation of mathematical data.

Bi-lingual/ESL

The number of ESL children is very small this year.

We have decided that we will include the ESL children with the PCEN math children as operators of the school store. In that way these children will have an opportunity to interact in English in an authentic way with all the other children in the school.

The ESL children will form the basis of a committee (with the PCEN math children) to make decisions about what should be sold, at what prices, during which times, and for what purpose.

We believe the store will touch every member of the school and will improve the speaking and language skills of our ESL children.

Other:

I include here some past achievements in inclusion and technology, including a recently published article I wrote for "Teaching K-6" on the use of portables in the elementary school.

Our inclusion program continues to be exemplary including taking each of our physically handicapped children in grades 4-6 camping each year.

In addition we continue to strengthen our conflict mediation program using mediators in the playground each day to help the K-3 children resolve problems that arise during recess. Our 4-6 graders all have instruction in conflict mediation over the school year.

We will establish a sixth grade newspaper for this school year, using our computer teacher as leader in this.

We continue to meet in weekly grade meetings to create forumn for discussion and planning.

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